

ACT FIVE

SCENE 1

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne,
And all this day an unaccustomed spirit
5 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead—
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think—
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips
That I revived and was an emperor.
10 Ah me! How sweet is love itself possessed
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

Enter ROMEO'S man BALTHASAR

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
15 How fares my Juliet? That I ask again,
For nothing can be ill if she be well.

BALTHASAR

Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.
Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
20 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault
And presently took post to tell it you.
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

ACT FIVE

SCENE 1

ROMEO *enters.*

ROMEO

If I can trust my dreams, then some joyful news is coming soon. Love rules my heart, and all day long a strange feeling has been making me cheerful. I had a dream that my lady came and found me dead. It's a strange dream that lets a dead man think! She came and brought me back to life by kissing my lips. I rose from the dead and was an emperor. Oh my! How sweet it would be to actually have the woman I love, when merely thinking about love makes me so happy.

ROMEO's servant BALTHASAR *enters.*

Do you have news from Verona!—What is it, Balthasar? Do you bring me a letter from the friar? How is my wife? Is my father well? How is my Juliet? I ask that again because nothing can be wrong if she is well.

BALTHASAR

Then she is well, and nothing is wrong. Her body sleeps in the Capulet tomb, and her immortal soul lives with the angels in heaven. I saw her buried in her family's tomb, and then I came here to tell you the news. Oh, pardon me for bringing this bad news, but you told me it was my job, sir.

ROMEO

Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!
25 Thou know'st my lodging. Get me ink and paper,
And hire post horses. I will hence tonight.

BALTHASAR

I do beseech you, sir, have patience.
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

ROMEO

30 Tush, thou art deceived.
Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR

No, my good lord.

ROMEO

No matter. Get thee gone,
35 And hire those horses. I'll be with thee straight.

Exit BALTHASAR

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.
Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary—
40 And hereabouts he dwells—which late I noted
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones,
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
45 An alligator stuffed, and other skins
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,
50 Were thinly scattered to make up a show.

ACT 5, SCENE 1

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

Is it really true? Then I rebel against you, stars! You know where I live. Get me some ink and paper, and hire some horses to ride. I will leave here for Verona tonight.

BALTHASAR

Please, sir, have patience. You look pale and wild as if you're going to hurt yourself.

ROMEO

Tsk, you're wrong. Leave me and do what I told you to do. Don't you have a letter for me from the friar?

BALTHASAR

No, my good lord.

ROMEO

No matter. Get on your way and hire those horses. I'll be with you right away.

BALTHASAR *exits*.

Well, Juliet, I'll lie with you tonight. Let's see how. Destructive thoughts come quickly to the minds of desperate men! I remember a pharmacist who lives nearby. I remember he wears shabby clothes and has bushy eyebrows. He makes drugs from herbs. He looks poor and miserable and worn out to the bone. He had a tortoise shell hanging up in his shop as well as a stuffed alligator and other skins of strange fish. There were a few empty boxes on his shelves, as well as green clay pots, and some musty seeds. There were a few strands of string and mashed rose petals on display.

Noting this penury, to myself I said,
"An if a man did need a poison now"—
Whose sale is present death in Mantua—
"Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him."
55 Oh, this same thought did but forerun my need,
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house.
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
What, ho! Apothecary!

Enter APOTHECARY

APOTHECARY

Who calls so loud?

ROMEO

60 Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
65 And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

APOTHECARY

Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.

ROMEO

70 Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? Famine is in thy cheeks.
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes.
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back.
The world is not thy friend nor the world's law.
75 The world affords no law to make thee rich.
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.
(*holds out money*)

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Noticing all this poverty, I said to myself, "If a man needed some poison"—which they would immediately kill you for selling in Mantua—"here is a miserable wretch who'd sell it to him." Oh, this idea came before I needed the poison. But this same poor man must sell it to me. As I remember, this should be the house. Today's a holiday, so the beggar's shop is shut. Hey! Pharmacist!

The APOTHECARY enters.

APOTHECARY

Who's that calling so loud?

ROMEO

Come here, man. I see that you are poor. Here are forty ducats. Let me have a shot of poison, something that works so fast that the person who takes it will die as fast as gunpowder exploding in a canon.

APOTHECARY

I have lethal poisons like that. But it's against the law to sell them in Mantua, and the penalty is death.

ROMEO

You're this poor and wretched and still afraid to die? Your cheeks are thin because of hunger. I can see in your eyes that you're starving. Anyone can see that you're a beggar. The world is not your friend, and neither is the law. The world doesn't make laws to make you rich. So don't be poor. Break the law, and take this money. (*he holds out money*)

APOTHECARY

My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO

I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

APOTHECARY

80 *(gives ROMEO poison)* Put this in any liquid thing you will
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

ROMEO

(gives APOTHECARY money)
There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.
85 I sell thee poison. Thou hast sold me none.
Farewell. Buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

Exeunt

ACT 5, SCENE 1

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

APOTHECARY

I agree because I'm poor, not because I want to.

ROMEO

I pay you because you're poor, not because you want me to buy this.

APOTHECARY

(gives ROMEO poison) Put this in any kind of liquid you want and drink it down. Even if you were as strong as twenty men, it would kill you immediately.

ROMEO

(gives APOTHECARY money) There is your gold. Money is a worse poison to men's souls, and commits more murders in this awful world, than these poor poisons that you're not allowed to sell. I've sold *you* poison. You haven't sold me any. Goodbye. Buy yourself food, and put some flesh on your bones. I'll take this mixture, which is a medicine, not a poison, to Juliet's grave. That's where I must use it.

They exit.

ACT 5, SCENE 2

Enter FRIAR JOHN

FRIAR JOHN

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, ho!

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE

FRIAR LAWRENCE

This same should be the voice of Friar John.
Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

FRIAR JOHN

5 Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
10 Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth.
So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN

I could not send it—here it is again—
(*gives* FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter)
15 Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice but full of charge,
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
20 May do much danger. Friar John, go hence.
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

ACT 5, SCENE 2
NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 5, SCENE 2

FRIAR JOHN *enters.*

FRIAR JOHN

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, hey!

FRIAR LAWRENCE *enters.*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That sounds like the voice of Friar John. Welcome back from Mantua. What does Romeo say? Or, if he wrote down his thoughts, give me his letter.

FRIAR JOHN

I went to find another poor friar from our order to accompany me. He was here in this city visiting the sick. When I found him, the town health officials suspected that we were both in a house that had been hit with the plague. They quarantined the house, sealed up the doors, and refused to let us out. I couldn't go to Mantua because I was stuck there.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Then who took my letter to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN

I couldn't send it. Here it is. (*he gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter*) I couldn't get a messenger to bring it to you either because they were scared of spreading the infection.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood, the letter was not just a nice greeting. It was full of very important information. It's very dangerous that it hasn't been sent. Friar John, go and get me an iron crowbar. Bring it straight back to my cell.

FRIAR JOHN

Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

Exit FRIAR JOHN

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now must I to the monument alone.

Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.

25 She will beshrew me much that Romeo

Hath had no notice of these accidents.

But I will write again to Mantua,

And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.

Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb!

Exit

ACT 5, SCENE 2

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

FRIAR JOHN

Brother, I'll go and bring it to you.

FRIAR JOHN exits.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now I must go to the tomb alone. Within three hours Juliet will wake up. She'll be very angry with me that Romeo doesn't know what happened. But I'll write again to Mantua, and I'll keep her in my cell until Romeo comes. That poor living corpse. She's shut inside a dead man's tomb!

FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.